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AN ADDRESS
TO THE
Union Mission Family.

The substance of an address to the "*Union Mission Family*," delivered at a farewell prayer-meeting, held with them, April 25, 1820 ; in the Dutch Reformed Church, in Crown-street, Philadelphia, while on their way to the Osage Indians, under the auspices of the "*United Foreign Missionary Society*," by the Rev. WILLIAM NEILL, D. D., Pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia ; furnished for publication at the request of the family.

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DEAR DEVOTED FAMILY,

THE solicitude which we feel for the success of your mission, impels us to submit to your serious consideration a few words of friendly advice, which we beg you to receive in the spirit of meekness.

You are going forth in the name of CHRIST, supported by the prayers and charities of the pious, to convey the tidings of salvation, and the useful arts of civilized life to our red brethren in the western wilderness. The enterprize is glorious ; and, whatever seems likely to favour its accomplishment, will not be deemed by you unworthy of attention.

Allow us, therefore, to counsel you in the first place,

1. To take care of your health. You have just resigned the comforts of home, and are entering on a long, fatiguing, and perilous journey. Should your health fail at the outset, you cannot proceed ; or should it be materially impaired, the mission must be deprived of your active services. It will be a sacred duty for you, therefore, to travel moderately and as comfortably as your circumstances will permit ; taking food and rest regularly ; and cultivating christian cheerfulness and contentment. But on this subject your Physician will advise and prescribe better than we can.

2. Be careful to maintain harmony and good order among yourselves. Love one

another, with a pure heart, fervently. Treat each other *respectfully*, as well as kindly; making due allowance for human frailty, and for that diversity of opinion in small matters, which generally results from a diversity of early education and domestic habits. You are a family; and in every family, mutual forbearance is indispensable to peace and social comfort. Like other families, you have a head; a father, whose duty it is to care for you, and consult your best interests: let him be respected, and regarded by you with filial reverence. Your aim is professedly *one*: self-will is to have no place among you. Be perfectly joined together; of one judgment; and of one soul. "How good and pleasant it is to see brethren dwelling together in unity! "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

3. Take heed to the feelings which you indulge and the language you hold, concerning the manner in which your persons, and

your mission are treated by various descriptions of people. Try to feel charitably on all occasions and towards all men. Do not talk much to strangers about your sacrifices, trials or designs. Avoid invidious comparisons of places and persons. Be courteous and mild ; yet firm and resolute in every good purpose. Be thankful, and show yourselves thankful to those who favour your undertaking. Give offence to no one ; whether Greek or Jew, friend or foe, if you can avoid it, without neglecting the claims of truth, or the rights of conscience. In the meekness of heavenly wisdom, endeavour to commend your benevolent enterprize to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The cause in which you have embarked is great and good. It needs no foreign aid. It scorns all alliance with cunning-craftiness, and worldly policy. Remember whose servants you are, and what spirit you are of. "It is enough for the servant to be as his Lord." Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. "Bless them who persecute you: bless and curse not." "Be not overcome of evil ; but overcome evil with good."

4. Observe economy in the use of the supplies which are furnished you, by the public, and by benevolent individuals or associations. To a sufficient quantity of wholesome diet and comfortably apparel you are fairly entitled ; but superfluities are not necessary ; nor are they at all suitable to the missionary life. In this matter it will be important for you to avoid even the appearance of evil. No individual among you has a right to appropriate to his own use, a single article, which has been, or may be contributed to the support of the mission ; nor should any one, who is able to render active service, expect to be maintained in idleness.

5. Be circumspect in your conduct towards the Indians, when you shall have pitched your tent among them. Endeavour to win their affection and secure their confidence, by a *rigid* and *uniform* adherence to the principles of truth and justice, in all your intercourse with them. Avoid as much as possible, all interference in their party quarrels, and in their secular affairs, except by way of advice in discharging your duty as missionaries. *Shun land-speculation in particular, as the bane of*

christian zeal, and missionary success. Teach them the most important doctrines of the Gospel, and the most useful arts of civilization, first. Neither metaphysical subtleties, nor the refinements of luxury can be of much use to an unlettered people. Do not expect *too much* of them in your endeavours to train them to civilized and christian habits. In these things, they are but children, and like children they need line upon line,—precept upon precept,—here a little, and there a little, gently, and as they may be able to bear it. And withal, be mindful of the oracle which saith, “Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase.”

6. *Be careful of your own personal piety.* At present your hearts are warm;—your courage is stimulated by the prayers and kind attentions of christian friends. But the stimulus arising from these sources, will soon cease to operate. Your fine feelings will, in a measure at least, subside. These kind friends who, if it were necessary, would wash your feet, and carry you in their arms, are not going with you into the woods, beyond the Mississippi. There you will stand in special

need of the presence and smiles of God your Saviour. Yea, the constraining love of Christ is the only principle that can support and comfort you in the self-denials and toils that await you, on the destined field of your labours. O, then, beloved, as you would prosecute the work, to which you have put your hands, without looking back, cherish the love of God in your souls, by a diligent attention to the instituted means. Listen not to the disheartening insinuations of scepticism and unbelief. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Abound in prayer. Commune with your own hearts. Read the Bible as the very word of the living God. Seek the witness of the Spirit with your spirits, that you are God's children; and try to feel that you are not your own, but are bought with "*a price all price beyond.*" Thus may you be able to say honestly with Paul the apostle, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain!!"

7. Finally, try to bear in mind, continually, the awful responsibility of your station. Great confidence is reposed in you; let your conduct prove that this confidence has not been mis-

placed. Strong hopes are entertained of the success of this well-meant and mighty enterprise; let not these dear expectations be disappointed through any rashness or neglect on your part. First impressions, in a work of this kind, are, generally, of extensive and lasting influence. If this first effort in favour of our needy friends of the Osage nation fail, it may be long before a second will be made; but if it succeed even in a small degree, and we hear of your good conduct when you get to the scene of action, it will give us great pleasure to contribute, according to our ability, to strengthen your hands, and encourage your hearts in the good work of the Lord. Disappointments are indeed to be counted upon; nor should we be discouraged by them; "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." Those dispensations which to our contracted view, seem to threaten disaster, are often "blessings in disguise." Witness the destruction of the printing office in India, and the death of Harriet Newell. These dark events of Providence were overruled, and rendered extensively beneficial to the missionary cause. Yes, dear Friends, if

your lives, or the property belonging to the mission should be lost on the way to the Arkansaw, or soon after your arrival there, we must not conclude that *your* labours and *our* contributions have been "in vain in the Lord." Nothing in the great plan of divine Providence is useless. The soldier who falls in scaling a fortress, renders a service to his country as important, perhaps, as he who survives the conflict, and joins in the shout of victory. If it be glorious to die for one's country, it is far *more* glorious to die in attempting to save immortal souls from the second death. Go then, ye consecrated ones, on your kind errand of mercy. Tell the children of nature, in the western forest, that they are given to Christ by divine covenant, as a part of his rightful inheritance. Tell them of what he has done and suffered for lost men ; and urge his claim to their faith and obedience. Tell them that he is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Tell them that "his blood cleanseth from all sin ;" and "that his righteousness is unto, and upon every one that believeth." Go in the strength of the Lord God, not fearing what may befall you by the

way. Whether your bones are to lie in the river's bed, or in the bosom of the new soil, beyond the river, far from the sepulchres of your fathers, Jesus will give his angels charge concerning them, and not one of them shall be missing in the morning of the resurrection. Go, assured of our kind regards and fervent intercessions : and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits, Amen !

